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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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Jordan: [The commanding officer of the Jordanian Fifth Artillery Regiment was arrested on 20 March on suspicion of complicity in a "pro-Nasir plot to overthrow the present regime,"] Like the 14 March arrests of 11 other officers on the same grounds, this appears to be an effort by influential Bani Sakhr Bedouin elements to eliminate opposition factions and enhance their own role within the army. They may try to go further during the absence from the country of the King and most other key government leaders and develop their position in the army to the point where they would wield the governing power--possibly ousting Prime Minister Rifai. The American chargé believes that, in any case, this factionalism within the officer corps has already reduced the army's effectiveness to such a degree that there is serious doubt of its ability to maintain internal security.]

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France-Indochina: [France seems to be accelerating its efforts in the Indochina area to attract Laos and Cambodia into an association with the new French Community. France has turned down US plans for joint training of the Laotian Army, and the French ambassador in Cambodia has been playing a independent role in that country.]

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France May Increase Unilateral Activity in Indochina

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[There are indications that De Gaulle's concept of a "great France" has led him to instruct his ambassadors in the Indo-china area to increase their efforts to restore French prestige and influence, with the probable goal of attracting Laos and Cambodia into association with the new French Community, according to the American ambassador in Paris. Moreover, French officials seem convinced that the United States is somehow responsible for the abortive Cambodian revolt and for the Laotian denunciation of the Geneva accords; the French believe the latter event has created a dangerous situation by provoking Communist China and North Vietnam.]

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[Paris continues to oppose US plans to train the Laotian Army. In addition, France's refusal to accept Laos' position that it is no longer bound by the restrictive provisions of the Geneva accords appears motivated, at least in part, by a determination to preserve its monopoly over the training function.]

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[In Cambodia, French Ambassador Gorce has been playing [redacted] independent role which has been disadvantageous to US relations with Prince Sihanouk. His independent warning to Sihanouk of the abortive Dap Chhuon coup gave the impression that US silence stemmed from complicity in the affair.]

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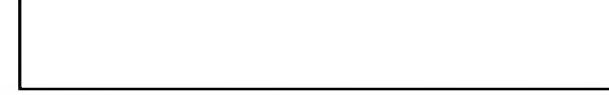
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[French ambassador in Saigon recently implied that Diem, looking to the eventual unification of Vietnam, is unperturbed by North Vietnamese occupation of a disputed area on the Laotian frontier.]

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